

Claims

1. A washer for use in a plumbing installation in which a pipe member is mounted in or connected to an article of sanitaryware, the washer comprising at least first and second parts, the parts being movable with respect to each other between a first configuration in which they define a bore, such that in use the washer may enclose a pipe member which passes through the bore, and a second configuration in which a pipe may be inserted into or withdrawn from the bore generally radially.

2. A washer according to claim 1 wherein the parts are completely separable.

3. A washer according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the parts include releasable latch means for allowing the parts to releasably engage each other.

4. A washer according to claim 1 wherein the parts are hingedly attached at an edge region of the washer.

5. A washer according to claim 4 wherein the parts are held together in the first, closed configuration by releasable latch means.

6. A washer according to any of claims 1 - 5 wherein the releasable latch means comprises a projection and socket.

7. A washer according to claim 1 wherein the parts of the washer are permanently attached together in one

region and are flexible so that the two parts can be urged apart to adopt the second, open configuration.

8. A washer according to claim 7 wherein the two
5 parts may be flexed apart in a direction substantially parallel to the axis of the bore.

9. A washer according to any of claims 1 - 8
wherein the two parts of the washer are made of plastic
10 and are formed as one piece of plastic.

10. A washer according to any of claims 1 - 9
wherein the washer includes a slot located between the two parts of the washer, which slot may be used for
15 prising apart the two parts of the washer.

11. A washer according to any of claims 1 - 10
wherein an internal surface of the bore is threaded.

20 12. A washer for use in plumbing in which a pipe member passes through a hole in an article of sanitaryware, creating a gap between the hole in the sanitaryware and the pipe member, the washer comprising at least one part having a bore defined therein for
25 receiving the pipe member, and at least one projection extending from the washer in a substantially axial direction, for locating in the gap between the pipe member and the article when the washer is urged against the article in use, so as to centralise the washer
30 substantially with respect to the hole in the article.

13. A washer according to claim 12 wherein the or each projection is arranged so that when the washer is

inserted into a hole in an article of sanitaryware, and the pipe member passes through the washer, the pipe member is located substantially centrally with respect to the hole in the article.

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14. A washer according to claim 12 or claim 13 wherein the one or more projections are flexible so that they may fit into holes of different sizes.

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15. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 14 wherein the one or more projections comprise a split ring.

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16. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 14 wherein the one or more projections comprise a frusto-cone.

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17. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 16 wherein the one or more projections are resiliently biased radially outwardly against a hole in an article in use.

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18. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 17 wherein the bore is substantially circular.

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19. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 18 wherein there are three projections protruding from the washer in a substantially axial direction.

20. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 19 wherein at least one projection is flexible and has at least one substantially flat bearing surface for

bearing against an interior of a hole in an article of sanitaryware.

21. A washer according to any of claims 12 - 20
5 wherein the interior surface of the bore in the washer is threaded for engagement with a pipe.

22. A method of installing a washer on a pipe member the washer comprising two parts which are
10 movable with respect to each other between a closed configuration in which they define a bore therebetween and an open configuration in which a pipe member may be inserted or withdrawn from the bore generally radially with respect to the washer, the method comprising
15 causing the parts of the washer to adopt the open configuration, introducing the pipe member between the parts substantially radially with respect to the washer, and causing the parts of the washer to adopt the closed configuration, thereby substantially
20 enclosing the pipe member within the bore defined by the parts of the washer.

23. A method according to claim 22 comprising bringing together two separate parts of the washer
25 around the pipe member and causing the two separate parts to engage to enclose the pipe member.

24. A method according to claim 22 comprising causing the two parts of the washer to adopt the closed
30 configuration by hinged movement of the parts.

25. A method according to any of claims 22 - 24 comprising pressing together the two parts around the

pipe member until the two parts make a latching engagement, which latching engagement produces an audible indication, such as a click, to confirm that the latching has occurred.

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26. A method of centralising a pipe member in a hole in an article of sanitaryware, the pipe member having a pipe portion, the pipe portion being housed in a hole of the sanitaryware, and the diameter of the hole being greater than the diameter of the pipe portion, such that a gap exists between the pipe portion and the hole in the sanitaryware, the method comprising the steps of:

fitting a washer to the pipe portion, the washer having at least one projection extending from the washer in a substantially axial direction with respect to the pipe portion, so that the at least one projection extends towards the article of sanitaryware;

locating the at least one projection in the gap between the sanitaryware and the pipe portion;

tightening the washer against the sanitaryware so that the at least one projection makes a friction fit between the pipe portion and the hole of the sanitaryware so that the pipe member is centralised with respect to the hole in the sanitaryware.

27. A method of centralising a pipe member in an article of sanitaryware according to claim 25, in which the washer is openable and movable between a first closed configuration defining a bore and a second open configuration, the step of fitting the washer further comprising the steps of:

opening the washer;

engaging the bore of the open washer with the pipe portion;

closing the washer around the pipe portion.